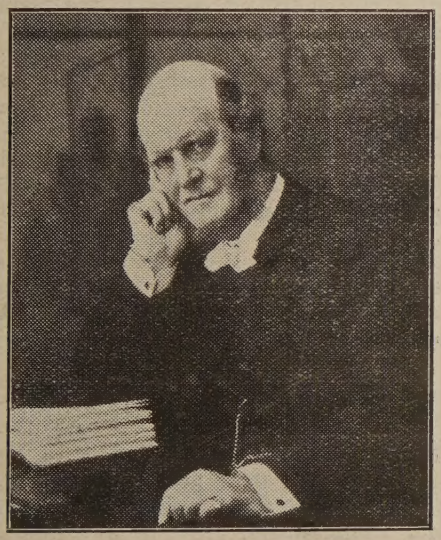
UNITY

An Organ of Reasonable Religion.

"One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves."—*Tennyson.*

No. 34. [Vol. III.—7.] July, 1906. ONE PENNY.



Rev. H. ENFIELD DOWSON, B.A.,

Minister of Hyde Chapel, Gee Cross, Hyde, Cheshire. Educated for the Ministry at Manchester New College, London, 1857-63; took the degree of B.A., London University, 1860; co-pastor at the Church of the Messiah, Birmingham, 1863-67; settled at Gee Cross, 1867; in early days was connected with the congregation and Sunday School of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, where he came under the powerful influence of Travers Madge; was President of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, 1895-6; some years Hon. Secretary to the Unitarian Home Missionary College; is now Chairman of Committee of Manchester College, Oxford; Senior Hon. Secretary, Provincial Assembly of Presbyterian and Unitarian Ministers and Congregations of Lancashire and Cheshire.

Mr. Dowson has taken a very active part in the Unitarian movement in England, more especially in the Manchester district; in the town of Hyde his church is the most influential amidst those of many other denominations, and he himself is by far the leading minister amongst the ministers and clergy of the town; he is often called the "Bishop of Hyde," and is on the most friendly terms with all churches, frequently extending to them impartially a helping hand; an ardent educationalist of the "public control" order, and a strong politician, he has been and is a great personal force in public affairs in his own locality and elsewhere; as a platform speaker he combines straightforward common sense with an abundant fund of homely humour, and never fails to arouse his audience; his preaching is earnest, alive, practical, and devout; after nearly completing a ministry of 40 years with his present church, he is more popular and dearer to the hearts of his people than ever; and amongst the churches of East Cheshire he is the chief of all the apostles.

Varieties.

I cannot believe in endless hell
And heaven side by side. How could I dwell
Among the saved for thinking of the lost?
With such a lot, the best would suffer most.
Sitting at feast, all in a Golden Home,
That towered over dungeon-gates of Doom,
My heart would ache for all the lost that go
To wail and weep in everlasting woe;
Through all the music I must hear the moan,
Too sharp for all the harps of heaven to drown.

—Gerald Massey.

He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not, is a fool; shun him.
He who knows not, and knows that he knows not, is humble; teach him.
He who knows, and knows not that he knows, is asleep; wake him.
He who knows, and knows that he knows, is wise; follow him.

—Eastern Proverb.

"I seek after the truth, by which no man was ever yet injured."

"He that cannot think is a fool;
He that will not think is a bigot;
He that dares not think is a slave."

Unitarian History.

I.—ITS CONTENTS.

Unitarians ought to be well acquainted with the history of Unitarianism. Especially is it their duty to see that their own young people do not grow up in ignorance of it.

But first it is necessary that there should be clear ideas as to what it is of which it is desirable to know the history. Unitarianism: What is it? To begin with, it is important to understand that Unitarianism is that attitude of mind which indicates a desire to seek for truth, in freedom to think and to investigate, without fear of results—and openness of mind to receive new light from any source whatever, and a readiness to alter previous conclusions and to change opinions in accordance with this new light when it comes.

That is the spirit of Unitarianism. It recognises that all Truth is One; that of two things in doctrine which contradict each other both cannot be true; that all things which are true are in agreement with each other; that Truth can injure no man, and is not to be feared.

This openness to Truth, and this free seeking for it, necessitates the acceptance of human Reason as the guide, and the trustworthiness of the human faculties as means of judging what is true and what is untrue. The doctrines accepted in Unitarianism as expressions of ascertained Truth must therefore be reasonable. The Religion of Unitarians must be a reasonable religion. No Unitarian despises the reasoning faculty, or ever speaks of its proper exercise with contempt. It is a divine gift intended for free and reverent use, to enable human beings to understand the works of creation, to intelligently read in nature the purposes of the Creator, and to think the thoughts of God.

In this free search after Truth, and this unrestricted exercise of the reasoning powers, certain discoveries of truth have been made; these, expressed in words and defined, have been accepted as statements and interpretations of truth, and taught by Unitarians as doctrines upon which they are agreed. Such statements of doctrine, along with the fundamental principles of freedom to seek, and the necessity of Reason, and the practical application of those principles and doctrines, constitute that movement of thought and life known as Unitarianism.

Some of these doctrines may now be mentioned. 1st, The Unity of God in one person—the Heavenly Father. 2nd, The Unity of Man—of all mankind as children of the One God. 3rd, The Unity of Man with God in the natural divineness of human nature. 4th, The Unity of Man's life on earth, of the past and the present and the future of the human race, and of this life with the life to come. 5th, The Unity of all life in Nature, in all creation, showing that the Universe is One. 6th, The Unity of all Truth, all departments of truth under many different names being in necessary agreement.

7th, The Unity of all Religion as contrasted with the diversities of theology. 8th, The Unity of achievement in the one final destiny of all men in the attainment of perfect life and salvation from every possible danger.

These Unities are some of the doctrines of Unitarianism. But there are other doctrines connected therewith, such as the Leadership of Jesus, his manhood, and his example as the noblest of men, the holiest of teachers, the greatest of prophets and reformers among men; the Gospel of Jesus as the truest way to salvation; the Bible a human book, but the best amongst all the grand Scriptures of the human race; that all Truth is God's Word; that Character is of more importance than opinion or creed; that real judgment comes in the reaping of consequences; that heaven and hell are conditions within men, which shape conditions without; that God's love will overcome all obstacles and triumph in all things; that the true atonement is at-one-ment, or agreement with the Divine Will; that all development and progress must tend towards the establishment of God's kingdom of heaven on earth, and be fulfilled in perfect life and immortality beyond.

Now, these ideas and doctrines have a history; and their history is the history of Unitarianism; and that history will be sketched in succeeding chapters.

The "Message" People.

The Editors of "The Message" are so strongly Unitarian in some of their ideas that they hesitate not to advertise to their readers what "Unity" claims for Unitarianism. In our May number we said: "Anything better or truer than Unitarianism will still be Unitarianism—for Unitarianism is the best and truest, because it can absorb all that is better and truer." Of course, this is a paradoxical statement; we knew it was when we penned it; but a paradox is often a very brief form of conveying what is true. And "The Message" people reproduce it in their own magazine, and draw special attention to it, for which service we give them thanks. May their efforts in Unitarian propaganda increase. Yet evidently they object to the form in which it is stated, and by an easy process of logic chopping attempt to make it look ridiculous. Could they not by such means make any paradox appear to be absurd, no matter how true? They know, as our other readers know, that the meaning of the paradox is this, that—Unitarianism means, along with other things, freethought and evolution in the search after truth, and therefore a capacity to receive any new truth as yet undiscovered; consequently anything that may be revealed or discovered that is better than the present doctrines of Unitarianism will, because better and truer, become included in and be itself Unitarianism; amongst all theological systems of thought now existing, Unitarianism is the best and truest known, because it is open to absorb

into itself all new truth that is as yet unknown, as better and completer than what is included in Unitarianism to-day. This, the seemingly contradictory paradox puts more briefly and more pithily.

Then our logic-chopping contemporary turns upon the Rev. Walter Lloyd because, in "Unity," he claimed that the fact that the Unitarians invited three Trinitarians to take part in their recent National Conference is evidence of the breadth and liberty of Unitarians; and they say that Mr. Lloyd's contention is "almost comic." We are not disposed to complain that they reproduce Mr. Lloyd's contention in their own pages; by so doing they are still sharing our work and assisting our efforts, and in such matters we say: More power to them. Yet it would be a very difficult thing for "The Message" Editors to quote any instance of a denominational conference of Trinitarians, showing equal breadth and liberty by inviting three eminent Unitarians to take part in its proceedings. If they could do that, Mr. Lloyd's contention might be almost comic. We wish they could do it, but they cannot.

Then it appears also that a statement by the Rev. H. D. Roberts, saying Unitarians "could not be sectarian if they tried," has troubled them somewhat. Unitarians refuse to insist on acceptance of particular doctrines, but welcome all who will join them; they stand for Unity, and not for dogmatic separation; it is against the spirit of Unitarianism to exclude any person on grounds of doctrinal belief; but in the exercise of their freedom they choose by vote those teachers and preachers who most truly represent the inclusive and unsectarian spirit; this conception of openness, this freedom of thought and spirit, this hospitality of mind and heart they name Unitarianism, because it is inclusive, not exclusive; and in the exercise of this freedom and openness they have reached certain ideas, such as the Unity of God in One Being, the Unity of Man and of all mankind, the Unity of all Truth, the Unity of all Life here and hereafter; and these are included in Unitarianism. So there is much more truth in Mr. Roberts' statement than appears to some minds.

We would plainly ask "The Message" people to make clear the terms of their own Message, so that both Unitarians and Trinitarians may know where they are. They are either on the Trinitarian side or on that of the Unitarian. If not with the Trinitarian, why not say so?

Notes and News.

The "Unitarian Van" has done well. The work has been a greater success than was anticipated. The Missioners and speakers have met with a much better reception than was looked for; our gospel has been heard and received gladly.

The inquiries from hearers at the meetings have been so many and the demands for information so numerous, that the Van Mission has adopted "Unity" for Van Mission purposes, and a Special "Van Edition" of the June number had to be printed, having two pages devoted entirely to information about the Van work. Any persons or churches wishing to have copies of this Van edition can have them on the same terms as ordinary copies from July to September inclusive; orders to the Editor.

The Van programme for July is as follows:—July 2—7, Darwen and Great Harwood; Missioner, Rev. O. Binns. July 9—14, Whalley and Clitheroe; Rev. H. B. Smith. July 16—21, Chatburn and Gisburn; Rev. A. H. Dolphin. July 23—28, Barnoldswick and Skipton; Rev. W. Reynolds. Fuller particulars in the Van edition.

The Rev. T. P. Spedding, in an effective speech at the British and Foreign Association meetings in Whit-week, at Essex Hall, London, put the Van work appeal with good results in the securing of subscriptions to the fund.

At the B. and F.U. Association meetings, the Essex Hall lecture by the Rev. Dr. Crothers, on "The Making of Religion," was a masterly effort, and the paper read by the Rev. Gertrude Von Petzold, M.A., on "The Place of Women in the Early Church and in the Present Time," was a very impressive and eloquent presentation of the subject. The paper on "A Hillside Sunday School," by the Rev. A. W. Fox, M.A., of Todmorden, was also of exceptional interest at the S.S.A. meeting.

The Rev. H. E. Dowson, B.A., in discussion on the paper by the Rev. Miss Von Petzold, confessed that his wife once wrote his sermon, which was "encored" after he preached it.

In the annual report of the Central Postal Mission it is recorded that "Unity" has been found very effective for propagandist purposes.

The "Religious" difficulty, which is still such a stumbling-block in the discussion and settlement of the Education problem, is not religious; it is theological. If there were more real Religion in the matter, there would be no difficulty.

The Yorkshire Unitarian Union reports an encouraging extension of Unitarian activity in its area.

The Provincial Assembly of Presbyterian and Unitarian Churches of Lancashire and Cheshire was held at Padiham, June 14th, it being the centennial year of the origin of the Padiham Nazareth Congregation. The meetings were most hearty and encouraging, the sermon by the Rev. C. Roper, B.A., being an eloquent appeal for a lead from our churches in the application of Christianity to social problems.

The Padiham Unitarian congregation was of Cookite origin, 1806, when the Rev. Joseph Cooke was expelled from the Methodists at Rochdale for heresy. The Unitarian Churches of Newchurch, Rossendale, and Clover Street, Rochdale, also originated from this Methodist split.

The Rev. J. E. Manning, M.A., read a valuable paper at the Padiham meeting on the subject: "Unitarianism as seen from the outside and from the inside."

True to the Living Day.

Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes—they were souls that stood alone,
While the men they agonised for hurled the contumelius stone;
Stood serene, and down the future saw the golden beam incline
To the side of perfect justice, mastered by their faith divine,
By one man's plain truth to manhood and to God's supreme design.

By the light of burning heretics, Christ's bleeding feet I track,
Toiling up new Calvaries ever, with the cross that turns not back.
And these mounts of anguish number how each generation learned
One new word of that Grand Credo which in prophet hearts hath burned
Since the first man stood, God-conquered, with his face to heaven upturned.

'Tis as easy to be heroes as to sit the idle slaves
Of a legendary virtue carved upon our fathers' graves,
Worshippers of light ancestral make the present light a crime—
Was the Mayflower launched by cowards, steered by men behind their time?
Turn those tracks towards Past or Future that make Plymouth Rock sublime?

They were men of present valour, stalwart old iconoclasts,
Unconvinced by axe or gibbet that all virtue was the Past's;
But we make their truth our falsehood, thinking that hath made us free,
Hoarding it in mouldy parchments, while our tender spirits flee
The rude grasp of that great Impulse which drove them across the sea.

They have rights who dare maintain them; we are traitors to our sires,
Smothering in their holy ashes Freedom's new-lit altar-fires;
Shall we make their creed our jailer? Shall we in out haste to slay,
From the tombs of the old prophets steal the funeral-lamps away
To light up the martyr-faggots round the prophets of to-day?

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of Truth;
Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! We ourselves must Pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea,
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key.

—J. R. Lowell ("The Present Crisis.")

Jesus Redivivus.

By the Rev. A. CUNLIFFE FOX, B.A.

VII.—JESUS IN THE TEMPLE.

(Continued.)

Jesus himself is said to have announced that he had come "not to destroy, but to fulfil" (Mt. v., 17): Not to destroy either temple, or its faith, law, and ritual; but to fulfil the purpose of all. It is the proclamation of a reformer, not of a revolutionist, much less of an anarchist.

Jesus was always a Jew, always a Conformist, however lax in his conformity. He was lax in so far as he never made a virtue of conformity as such. It was not enough for him to say "Lord, Lord," to utter the shibboleth, and to make broad his phylacteries. There were plenty of Conformists of this type in Jewry in the days of Jesus, and we know what he thought of them. He himself was a sane, rational, and transparently sincere man, a man of courage and of independence, who was sensible of the divinity within him, and never hesitated to speak and act in accordance with its witness. It was not his practice to run away from his own mind and heart, on every occasion on which they threatened to bring him into conflict with the established systems of thought and conduct. He might both sing and pray with the spirit, but, like Paul, he would pray and sing with the understanding also, and, I doubt not, he, too, would rather have spoken "five words with his understanding than ten thousand words in a tongue." (I. Cor. xiv., 15, 19). Probably no contemporary Jew felt a deeper attachment to the faith of his fathers than he; none could have surpassed him in loyalty to its spirit, in respect for its law, or in emulation of its prophets. Its sacred writings were for him an inexhaustible mine of golden treasures; an inspired directory in religion and morals, which he had studied with reverent zest, and with profound educative effect upon his own character. It is extremely unlikely that he ever possessed a copy of the Scriptures, or even handled a copy outside of the synagogue; and yet no man ever made better use of them.

In his attitude to these writings we may gain a glimpse of his general bearing in relation to the current orthodoxy for which the temple stood. While recognising the authority of the Jewish Scriptures, he plainly refused to subscribe to the dogma of their infallibility; nay, he has himself given us the example of reverent but fearless criticism. His principle of interpretation is expressed in his question to the crowd: "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right." (Luke xii., 57). Certainly he was not then speaking of Biblical interpretation, but that was just how he treated his Bible. Its authority for him depended upon the judgment of his own reason and conscience, and where he saw fit to differ from it, he did not hesitate to differ, and to let his difference be known. Accordingly, in Mt. v., we read of a series of proposed amendments, involving in three particulars a total repeal of certain

clauses of the Jewish law. For all Christians that chapter should serve as a final refutation of their own doctrine of the absolute authority of the spoken or written word. Following in the footsteps of their master, they should judge the New Testament as he judged the Old.

This same spirit of manly independence, of reliance upon the assurances of his own good sense, is seen in all his words and acts which have reference to the priestly and popular religions. With much of what he heard and saw, he was, without doubt, in entire sympathy. There was much about the temple that was helpful and edifying. He himself frequented it, and joined in its services. At the same time, he saw the grave risks that necessarily accompanied its particular methods of religious expression, and in the manner of life of so many of its most conspicuous adherents he had abundant proof of the reality of those risks. Jesus was not afraid of strong language. He had sufficient provocation for its use, and, when called for, he used it. But his invective—as his whole polemic—was directed against the professors of religion, not against the thing professed. "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees" (Mt. xxiii.) is typical of this controversial preaching. The personal reference is always present. The doctrinal, seldom or never. And why? Because he failed to see that religious formulas and religious rites were quite indispensable for salvation. He never could see that. He saw that they were very far from being always effectual. He saw, too, that men might save themselves without these external aids. The temple was a very helpful institution, but the world would not go to pieces if it were destroyed. His nonconformity is explained by the fact that he said, in the words of Polonius, "Look thou character." This above everything else. And whatever helped to create and preserve character was, for him, not merely tolerable, but most highly commendable. Priests, as a rule, do not speak and teach like that; Christian, any more than Jewish. In short, Jesus shifted the emphasis from things external, where there is a perpetual tendency to place it, and where the temple almost always places it, and laid it upon the things of the mind, heart, and conscience. "Cleanse first the inside of the cup, that the outside thereof may become clean also." (Mt. xxiii., 26). "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Mt. xiii., 34).

To fulfil, not to destroy! That was his business. And he set to work like a true prophet of Israel, as he was both in spirit and in method. For his special kind of work, the set forms of the temple routine may have been a hindrance rather than a help. At any rate, he did not require them; neither a splendid edifice, nor a gorgeous ritual, nor an elaborate order of public worship. The mountain slope, the shore of the lake, God's own temple, and God's own ritual, were ample for his purpose. There, not in stately diction, but in plain, homely, forcible language, without accessories of any kind, the word went forth from heart to heart, the word of eternal truth and inimitable grace, eye-opening, heart-moving, and soul-saving. He spake not as the priests, but as the prophets before him; and the people were astonished at his teaching. (Mt. vii., 28-29).

(To be continued.)

Our Doctrine of Salvation.

We should all be very careful not to misrepresent the beliefs of other communions and individuals. It is to be feared that too many of us do not take sufficient pains to find out exactly—and from as near as possible to the fountain head—where those who differ from us actually stand. People are too apt to accept unquestioned what they are told by their spiritual leaders—who they naturally think ought to know—with regard to the beliefs held by members of other households of faith. Perhaps no denomination has suffered more from this lazy and reprehensible habit than the Unitarian. Among other misrepresented beliefs, our conception of salvation comes in for a deal of cheap estimating and fallacious reasoning. Hearing that we believe in the salvation of every human soul, we are sometimes held to believe that since the salvation of all is assured, personal moral effort is of little account. In reality, nothing could be further from the truth, for we believe that no soul will be saved without personal moral effort. Here is our doctrine of salvation in the words of Dr. Savage, of Boston:

We do not believe it is possible for a human soul ultimately to be lost. Why? Because we believe in God. God either can save all souls or He cannot. If He can and will not, then He is not God; if He would and cannot, then He is not God. Let us reverently say it: He is under an infinite obligation to His own self, to His own righteousness, to His own truth, His own power, His own love, His own character, to see to it that all souls, some time, are reconciled to Him.

This does not mean a poor, cheap, and easy salvation. It means that every broken law must have its consequences so long as it remains broken. It means that in this world and through all worlds the law-breaker is to be followed by the natural and necessary results of his thoughts, of his words, of his deeds; but it means that in this punishment the pain is a part of the divine love. For the love of God makes it absolutely necessary that the object of that love should be delivered from sin and wrong, and brought into reconciliation with Himself; and the pain, the necessary results of wrong-doing, is a part of the divine tenderness, a part of the divine faithfulness, a part of the divine love.

So we believe that through darkness or through light, through joy or through sorrow, some time, somewhere, every child of God should be brought into His presence, ready to sing the song of peace and joy and reconciled love.—Centonarius.

It is something to make people cry, more to make them laugh, most to make them think.

HOME CIRCLE.

When I was Young.

When I was young?—Ah, woful when!
Ah, for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,
How brightly then it flashed along;—
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Nought cared this body for wind or weather,
When Youth and I lived in't together.

—S. T. Coleridge.

A child was once much distressed that her brothers had set traps to catch birds. When asked what she had done in the matter, she said:

"I prayed that the traps might not catch the birds."

"Anything else?"

"Yes," she said, "I then prayed that God would prevent the birds from getting into the traps."

"Anything further?"

"Yes; I went out and kicked the traps all to pieces."

Dear Reader,—Which was the prayer?

Anyway, the child knew that faith without works was of little use.

Perplexed minister, wondering why a member of his congregation had not been seen at the Sunday services recently:—

Minister: "Mr. Blank, I have not seen you at service lately."

Mr. B.: "No. I have been away about three Sundays.'"

Minister: "I hope there has been no illness in the family."

Mr. B.: "Oh, no. I've been saving up for the anniversary."

And he put 6d. in the collection.

Randal's Principle—*continued.*

CHAPTER VI.

Mr. Saunders did see Randal again sooner than he expected, and under circumstances very different from any he had anticipated.

It was in a police court. Mr. Saunders was one of the magistrates on the bench, and Randal was a criminal in the dock.

A ragged boy, Dick Denton, was seen stealing a currant bun from a baker's shop—and by two persons, Randal Wray and a policeman. The policeman caught hold of the culprit to take him at once to prison; Randal rushed forward to prevent the officer from carrying out that intention. He laid his hand on the policeman's arm and urged him to let the boy go, as he himself would pay the cost of the bun to the baker.

Of course, the officer refused.

But Randal said: "The lad was starving. Make allowance for him! Don't take him!"

But the officer persisted. Randal did not cease trying to persuade; the policeman lost his temper, and said he would have him summoned for resisting the police in the execution of duty.

This was done, and Randal had to appear in answer to the charge. He told his story in a straightforward manner, relating all the circumstances. It appears that a short time before the theft Randal saw the boy begging bread at a house door. The woman of whom the boy begged was evidently much worried and irritated by her own cares, and answered the lad sharply and impatiently.

"But, missus, do give me a crust of bread. I've had nothin' to eat at all since yesterday mornin'!"

"No, I won't!" she replied. "Here's a policeman coming, and if you're not off, I'll call him to take you off."

Dick turned to look, saw the policeman, and then darted away as fast as his legs would carry him. A short time afterwards, in walking down a street not far away, Randal saw the same boy go into the baker's shop and commit the theft, followed by the policeman.

"Why did you object to the officer doing his duty?"

"I felt that the lad was driven to the deed by hunger; and I pitied him. I felt that I might have done the same, that any man might have done the same, with the famished feeling that he had. And it did seem such a shame that a poor lad in such distress should be made a criminal. I felt that if he were my own brother I should not want the officer to take him; and so I tried by appeal and persuasion to prevent him from doing so."

"Do you think you were doing right?"

"I did not think I was doing wrong in asking the officer to be merciful. Jesus Christ would have done the same if he had been in my place; of that I feel sure."

"Suppose the officer had let the boy go, what then? Wouldn't the lad continue thieving?"

"No, sir; I should have taken him and given him some food, and tried to secure him a chance of an honest living."

"What will happen if we let him off now, and we let you off, too?"

"I shall ask him to come along with me, and I will do what I can for him."

"Have you known him before?"

"No, sir; I never saw him until he was begging of the woman I spoke of."

"Well, Randal Wray, Mr. Saunders tells us that he knows you to be a young man of good character, and we know nothing against you but this, and

though the officer was doing his duty, we are convinced that you acted from a good motive, so we acquit you of the charge."

Randal waited a short time, and the boy, Dick Denton, was released from custody with a caution that he must not attempt to steal anything again, or he would find himself in prison.

Randal took Dick with him, begged clothes for him, secured him a place of work, and made it his business to protect Dick from getting into bad ways.

Mr. Saunders told Randal that he had set himself a difficult task, and that he was interested to see how Randal would succeed.

"I think I shall succeed," said Randal.

"What makes you think so?"

"Because I shall get your help," said Randal, "and the help of other friends."

"In all this, Randal, what is the principle that guides you?"

"My principle in everything, Mr. Saunders, is, that 'The Truth shall make you free'; I saw that lad was starving, and that he did not mean any wrong; which truth made me free from prejudice against him, free to pity and to help him."

"Oh, that's it, is it? And is that your principle in everything?"

"Yes, it is, sir. In all matters there is the truth to be got at, and when that is found it makes one free from any false notions about it, free to act truly."

"Well, it is not a bad principle, either; it was good enough for Jesus Christ," added Mr. Saunders.

(To be continued.)

Queries.

The following questions have been asked of the Editor at various times. They are numbered from the beginning of the series (in the June issue) for purposes of reference. Readers desiring information or seeking light may have their questions answered in this department of "Unity" by sending their queries to the Editor. If sent not later than the 18th of the month they may be answered in next issue.

12. The Unitarian Van.—Can we get the Unitarian Van into South Wales?

Most likely not, for this reason—that there is much more demand for Van service in the North of England than one van can meet. There will have to be several Unitarian Vans; why not one for South Wales?

13. The Lord's Supper.—Do Unitarian Churches administer the Communion of the Lord's Supper, and, if so, with what meaning?

Some do, but most of them do not. This service has fallen into disuse amongst Unitarians, as have other ecclesiastical rites; but where it is administered amongst them, it is as a renewal of consecration in remembrance of Jesus, to the duties and obligations of Christian fellowship and divine service.

14. A Methodist Query.—Why do Unitarians pick and choose in the use of the Bible, taking some portions and rejecting others?

Because they can do no other. They are bound in honesty to accept what is true and helpful, and to reject what appears to be untrue or useless. They only do more thoroughly what even the Methodists and all professed orthodox Christians have to do, that is—exercise their reason as to what can be accepted as profitable and what cannot be accepted. The orthodox reject more than many of them think. They do not accept the Jewish Sabbath; they do not now follow the injunction: Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live; they pay no heed to Paul's advice against women speaking, or about them wearing veils; they do not take the Lord's Supper as an evening meal, etc., etc., and why? Because they act on their own judgment, and accept what they think fit, and so do Unitarians.

15. John Biddle.—John Biddle is styled "the Father of English Unitarianism," but Unitarians are not agreed as to which is the right spelling of his name. Should it be written Biddle, or Bidle?

R. Spears has it "Biddle," and so also Toulmin, Theophilus Lindsey, Anthony Wood (1692), and others of Biddle's time; but A. Gordon and Bonet-Maury spell it "Bidle," as also the record of the Gloucester Sessions Court, 1644; "Biddle" seems to be the proper spelling.

16. Postal Missions.—What is a Postal Mission?

It is a method of supplying propagandist literature through the post in reply to applications made by persons who have seen offers of the same advertised in the newspapers. For information write to the Secretary, Central Postal Mission, Miss Florence Hill, 9, Heath Street, Hampstead, London, N.W.

The Unitarian's Evangel.

The Gospel we preach is a Gospel of God's eternal, boundless love, the good news that every human being is God's child; that here on earth, co-operating with God and discovering His laws, we may begin the creation of His kingdom now; that we may broaden and enlarge it until it encloses the world; and that it reaches out into the limitless ages of the future. And this is the Gospel of the Christ, changed in its form, if you please, but one in its essence; for he came, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying: The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Change your purpose, accept the message, and come into accord with the divine life. This is the Gospel that Christ preached: this is the Gospel we preach to-day.

—M. J. Savage, D.D.

The bravest are the tenderest,
The loving are the daring.

—Bayard Taylor.

What is Religion ?

Religion, in the degree to which it is true and worthy of man, comprises and unites the interests of his life. It is a sustained habit of contemplating human affairs in the light of ultimate issues. It therefore brings order and system into human life, correcting the abstraction of selfishness, the exaggeration of passion, and the urgency of desire. It throws upon the world the quiet light of a larger day, and brings out the deeper significance of man's deeds, as the sun the colours of the landscape. It is a principle of proportion and sanity, which gives its own place both to what is small and transient and to that whose worth is great and permanent; and it is far less an affair of another world than men have thought.—Prof. Henry Jones, LL.D.

The Antiquity of Unitarianism.

Through the lack of having made themselves familiar with the matter, there is a common and a widespread impression among people generally that Unitarianism is a new-fangled notion, a modern fad, a belief held only by a few, who are on one side of the main currents or religious life and advance.

Even if it were true, even if it were confined to the modern world, this would not necessarily be anything against it. The Copernican theory of the universe is new, is modern. So are most of the great discoveries that characterise and glorify the present age. But in the case of Unitarianism this cannot be said. It is not new: it is very old.

It is well known that all races started very far away from any monotheistic, or Unitarian, belief, and the Hebrews were no exception to that rule. If we examine the Old Testament we should find abundant traces to show that the Jews climbed out of Polytheism into Henotheism—that is, a position of belief in the real existence of many gods, but they were under allegiance to only one, their national deity—and out of Henotheism into Monotheism, or Unitarianism—so far as the meaning of that word is confined to a belief in the uni-personality of the Godhead. The nation had, of course, arrived at this position many years before the commencement of the Christian era, and it was universally and even passionately held by the Jews in the time of Jesus. Dr. M. J. Savage, upon whose authority the previous remarks are based, writes in his splendid book, "Our Unitarian Gospel," as follows:

"For the first three hundred years of the history of the Church, Unitarianism was its prevailing doctrine. Among the Church Fathers—Clement, Polycarp, Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, and Lactantius—all of them in their writings make it perfectly clear and unquestioned that the belief of the Church, the majority belief for the first three centuries was Unitarian. Of course, the process of thought here and there was going on which finally culminated in the doctrine of the Trinity. That is, people were beginning more and more to exalt, as they supposed, the character, the office, the mission of Jesus; coming more and more to believe that he was something more than a man, that he was above and beyond humanity.

But one other among the Fathers—Justin Martyr—one of the best known of all, takes care to point out explicitly his belief. He says: "There is a Lord of the Lord Jesus, being his Father and God, and the cause of his existence."—Centonarius.

The absence of a Creed no bar to unanimity of purpose.

It is commonly assumed by those who have not studied the matter that, because Unitarians have no printed and published creed, they are all abroad in their thinking. They take this for granted; they think that there must be just as many views of things are there are individuals.

After twenty years of experience as a Unitarian minister, I have come to the conviction that there is not a body of Christians in the world to-day, not Catholic or Presbyterian or Methodist or Congregational or any other, that is so united in its purposes, not only, but in its beliefs, as these very Unitarians.

And the fact is perfectly natural. Take the scientific men of the world. They do not expect a policeman after them if they do not hold certain scientific opinions. There is no authority to try them for heresy, or to turn them out of your society, unless they hold certain scientific ideas. They have no sense of compulsion except to find and accept that which they discover to be true. The one aim of science is the truth. There is no motive for anything else.

And truth being one, mark you, and they being free to seek for it, and all of them caring simply for that, they naturally come together. So that, without any external power or compulsion, the scientific men of the world are substantially at one as to all the great principles. They discuss minor matters; but, when they discuss, they are simply hunting for deeper truth, not trying to conquer each other.

Now Unitarians are precisely in this position. The only thing any of us desire is truth. We are perfectly free to seek for the truth; and, the truth being one, we naturally tend towards it, and tending towards it, we come together. So there is, as I have said, greater unanimity among Unitarians than among any other body in Christendom.

—M. J. Savage.

Who best
Can suffer, best can do; best reign,
Who first well hath obeyed. —Milton.

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